1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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£50,555,000. The figures illustrate the preponderant importance of livestock and particularly cattle and pigs in Irish economy.

The remaining £14,000,000 was made up of crops and turf, the latter alone accounting for £5,938,000. Among the crops, potatoes came first, with a value for the year of £3,786,000. Oats, cabbage, and barley accounted for about £900,000 each; and there were a few other items of smaller values, the largest of which was fruit at £466,000.

These figures of the agricultural products rather underestimate the amount of tillage products raised. In the words of the Census Report, they "do not include any part of the produce which was used for further agricultural production in the Saorstat whether that part was used on the farm on which produced or sold by one farmer to another – e.g. milk fed to calves, potatoes fed to pigs, hay, turnips, mangels fed to cattle, corn used for seed, horses used for farm work." [1]

Within this generality of the monetary value of the goods produced, one can begin to take account of the wide difference of the sizes of the holdings engaged in this agricultural production. A glance at the figure illustrating this kind of economy by relative size of acreage (Fig. 1) will bring the matter out.

The agricultural community carried on this production upon farms of very widely different character. Holdings range in size from one acre or less to 500 or more. Those under 30 acres comprise 23 per cent of the total acreage of agricultural land in the Saorstat, those of 30–50, 17 per cent; those of 50–100, 24 per cent; and those of 100–200, 19 per cent. Farms larger than 200 acres cover only 16 per cent of agricultural land.

In general, the smaller ones practice the more generalized economy, their production being markedly different from

[1] *Agricultural Output of Saorstat Eireann, 1926–27* (Department of Industry and Commerce, Statistics Branch, Dublin Stationery Office, 1930), p. 5.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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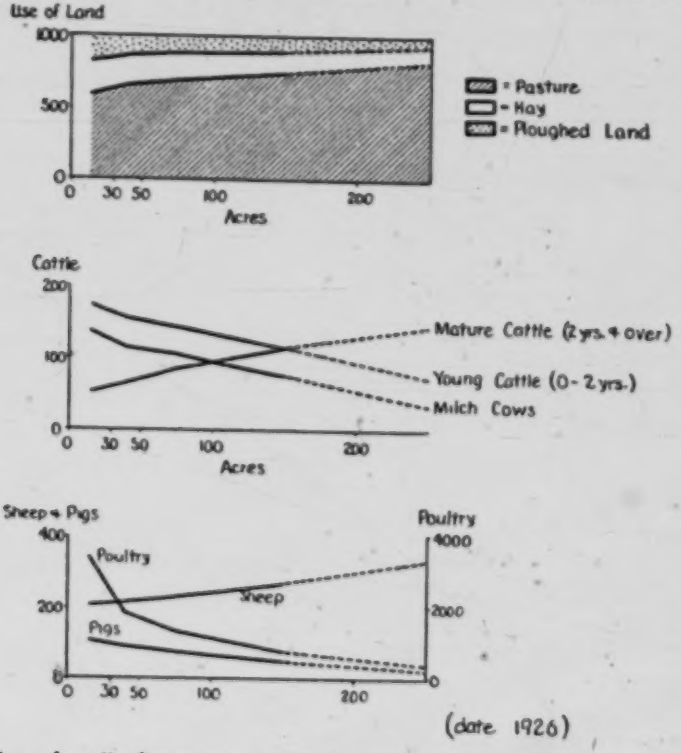
that of the large farms. The latter, especially in the midland counties, where they are most numerous, raise little more than beef cattle. Their owners are the graziers or

FIGURE 1

PRODUCTION ON LARGE AND SMALL HOLDINGS, ALL IRELAND, 1926 CENSUS



(date 1926)

"ranchers" of current political controversy in Ireland. The different economies express themselves in the census as follows:

The numbers of acres ploughed and the numbers under hay, per 1000 acres of agricultural land decrease continuously as the size of the holdings increases; the numbers of milch cows, of

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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young cattle, of pigs, and of poultry also decrease but the number of dry older cattle and of sheep per 1000 acres increase as the size of the holdings increases. The contrast between the smallest and the largest holdings is exceedingly great and is very great even between the second smallest and second largest. Contrasting the holdings 30–50 acres with holdings 100–200 acres the table shows that on equal areas of agricultural land, the smaller holdings have 32% more ploughed land, 29% more hay, 54% more milch cows, 53% more cattle under one year, 16% more cattle one to two years old, and 9% more cattle of all kinds, 80% more pigs, and 139% more poultry than the holdings 100–200 acres, but the latter have 24% more sheep, 52% more dry cattle, 2 to 3 years old, and 209% more dry cattle 3 years old or over than do holdings 30–50 acres.[2]

In County Clare, the area of our investigation, agriculture presents much the same character and the same difference between small and large farmers as does the whole of Ireland. Clare occupies a middle place among the counties; neither the large nor the small farm predominates. Almost always the small farmer has a garden in potatoes and cabbage with a few oats and turnips and perhaps some rye. The rest of his land will be under several meadows in hay, grazed during the winter months and in fields (pasture land) grazed during both summer and winter, if sheltered. In rough mountain areas sheep are common, particularly in the Broadford and Tubber districts. In addition to cattle, the smaller holder generally has a large flock of ducks, geese, and hens, and he keeps several pigs. These are also fed upon the oats, potatoes, cabbage, and milk left over after the other livestock have been fed. Specialization in poultry raising is still rare, though poultry stations are being established here and there under the supervision of agents of the Department of Agriculture. Certain areas, of course, show minor specializations, such as Miltown Malbay, a seacoast region known for its cabbage, and Newquay, known

[2] *Agricultural Statistics, 1847–1926, Report and Tables* (Department of Industry and Commerce, Statistics Branch, Dublin Stationery Office, 1930), p. xxi.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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them with holdings in other parts of the country when in the latter much mountain land is included. The valuations, however, are exceedingly high, the full valuation of the Ennis district (which includes the Fergus plain) being £67,000 for 112,000 acres compared with the neighboring Killadysert district at £25,000 for 62,000 acres. 233

The second of the "ranching districts" or areas of large holdings practicing this type of agriculture is the region in the northern part of the county called "the hills of Burren" (the Ballyvaughan area). This is a limestone country which provides rich winterage for cattle. Consequently land there is very valuable to the rancher who has to winter his store cattle. Grass grows there fairly richly throughout the winter among the limestone crags, and the cattle are allowed to forage for themselves. In several cases, farmers own large holdings of 200 acres and over in each of the two areas. They drive their cattle down from the winterages in April and back again in November.

Certain other farms of large size, and especially in rich alluvial areas such as Clarecastle and Newmarket-on-Fergus, make extensive use of tillage, primarily of oats. In other areas such as Tubber, Broadford, and Feakle, mountain land is given over to sheep. 233 243

County Clare, in fact, shows a fourfold division into sections differentiated partly geographically, partly by the different utilization of the soil. "West Clare" includes all the peninsula west and south of the ridge culminating in Mount Callan and cutting off the Fergus drainage from the Atlantic. Here the holdings are predominantly small, and the more generalized economy is common. "North Clare" covers the country of the "hills of Burren." "East Clare" contains both the rough country of Feakle and Broadford, where small mountain holdings approximate the conditions of West Clare, and the Tulla and Quin districts, which with "Mid-Clare" and "South Clare" cover the alluvial plain of the 311 471

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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Fergus River, where there are many "ranches" and, in parts, extensive oats tillage.

Statistics are available only for the whole of Clare; they give a comprehensive view of the county's farming.[3] All but 21.6 per cent of the population of 95,064 lived in country districts. The area they worked, 787,768 acres, was divided into 15,857 holdings, of which 1,179 did not exceed one acre, 909 contained from 1 to 5, 841 from 5 to 10, 1,108 from 10 to 15, and 3,767 from 15 to 30, 3,617 from 30 to 50, and 3,135 from 50 to 100. The farms larger than 100 acres numbered 997 in the 100 to 200 acre group, and 394 exceeding 200 acres. Clare thus fell into a category among counties in which medium-sized holdings were normal, but both the small farms and the large rancher type were present.

We have no separate statistics for Clare's produce, but we know that in June 1932 the land was being utilized in the following manner. There were only 465 acres of wheat, 335 acres of barley, 207 acres of rye, 1 acre of beans and peas, 147 acres of fruit, 3 acres of sugar beet, 57 acres of experimental ensilage for cattle, and 151 acres of miscellaneous root and green crops. The figures[4] show the small part played by vegetable products other than cabbage and potatoes used for human food. Bread, the great staple, was of course, made from imported flour or wheat. Potatoes and oats, however, made a better showing, with 13,518 and 8,199 acres respectively devoted to them. Turnips and mangels accounted for 3,897 and 306 acres respectively; like potatoes and oats, they are used for both human and animal consumption. This was the extent of ploughed land.

The great bulk of the area was, of course, in hay and pasture. There were 2,791 acres of first-year hay, 131,429 acres of other hay, and 394,791 acres of pasture.

[3] Figures taken from Annual Report, County Clare Council Agricultural Committee. June 1932.

[4] Report of the County Clare Agricultural Committee, 1932.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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476 The commonet form of coöperation is that which in-
246 volves lending a boy to a "friend" whenever he is needed. In order to illustrate this form of coöperation and to give the setting in which it takes place, it will be well to describe the hay harvest ina country district. We choose the district
[471] of Luogh. Luogh is a mountain region of small holdings, none of them larger than twenty-five acres, divided among twenty-four households. There was only one large farmer in the immediate vicinity; he worked his lands through a herdsman and, as he had his own hired hands, did not figure in the haymaking. All the rest of the holders had what is called "general purpose land" by the Land Commissioners; they had some bog, some meadow, several fields being grazed over, and a garden of potatoes, rye, cabbage, and oats, always less than an acre in extent. The number of cattle each had ranged from six cows, two calves, and two bullocks held by one holder with sixteen acres of mountain land and an addition about three miles off in fertile bottomland (he had got this, eight acres, several years before from the Land
[737] Commission) to none. The person having no cattle was an old bachelor, an old-age pensioner, who lived by himself on a farm of four acres stocked only with a few hens.

476 The hay was early, the weather favorable, and the harvest
246 began in mid-July. All the holders except two were Luogh
621 people related by complicated ties of blood and ancestral
589 association to the land and to each other. There were three lone bachelors, a widow helped by her brother, and three widowers helped respectively by one son, three sons and a daughter, and two sons. The other holders were married couples with each a son or two and perhaps a daughter present, if they were old, and many growing children if they
[167] were not. The region was one of large-scale emigration, so that a smaller number of young people were present than is
476 perhaps usual.
246 As the hay ripened and the weather turned fine, the fami-

Glanquin Mountain and the hills of Burren beyond. Along it one passes through ragged upland for a mile and a half. This is Kilnaboy Commons, and its many small fields bear witness to its having been a refuge of the evicted, laboriously cleared of stones. The upland is not high. It merely gives rise enough to start a half mile of gentle slope downward into a basin filled with a little lake. Rynamona lies round the lake.

The fields here are cleared, too, and cut up between with limestone ridges. But the grass grows richly among the crags and ridges. The farmers are a fairly prosperous lot.

Eight of their houses stand in an irregular cluster on the lake shore. This is Rynamona village. Five others are scattered through the fields and across the lake. These households and a few more a little further off make up the community. These are small farms of the kind we met in Luogh. No one has more than nine cows; and only one has fewer than two. Except for the eight houses huddled in the village, fields and meadows stretch away from the haggard gate. In the case of the villagers' holdings, the arrangement is not much different. Their fields are scattered about and behind their haggards in irregular patterns. In addition to these fields, most of them have several acres, carved out for them by the Land Commission on an estate about two miles off.

Rynamona is a closely knit community. Reduplicated bonds of kinship unite all the households. "We are all related one way or another," they describe it. Cooring is the usual form of coöperation, and the village as a whole holds itself responsible amid grumbles for the maintenance of the borheen (road) which leads out to the outside world of the towns. Nowadays the County Council pays the sons who break stones and lay them in the winter months, but the village still assigns a bit of the road to each householder. Small matter if the borheen is bad, for a well-trod maze of

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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464 try at all) is included. At the time, 1926, the census recorded 6.9 per cent of men and 3.4 per cent women as unemployed, figures to be added to make industrial totals. The percentages were very low, and by the advent of the De Valera regime in 1931 had increased considerably. However numerous they are, they do not change the industrial pic-
471 ture very much in Ireland. Small enterprises predominate, and very little of the great developments of the machine age is present. The supply and service industries are in a definite preponderance, and in that fact reflect the country's dependence upon its agriculture and agriculturalists.

463 The Census of Occupations is quite different in purpose from that of industries and industrial status and proceeds by different counts. To quote the notes:

> The difference between statistics of occupation and industries must be kept clearly in view. . . . A person's occupation is defined by the operations he performs in earning his living: grainmiller, jamboiler, tramdriver, packer, clerk. A person follows his occupation within a certain industry or service. Some occupations are peculiar to a single industry or service, . . . others are found in very many industries and services. . . .[1]

The Census of Occupations is obviously in many ways an elaboration of that of industries. The two overlap frequently. Yet they are distinct enough to give us an alternate view of Irish industrial activity of great detail. If now we examine this view for what it will tell us of the survival of rural industry, we see again that occupations other than those of farming are very few indeed in the country districts.

463 Table 5 records the occupations of the whole country
369 classed within industries. It lists followers of occupations living in rural districts in the left-hand column and followers of those living in urban districts in the right-hand column. Weighting the figures for all occupied persons properly between towns and country districts, we find that

[1] *Census of Population, 1926*, vol. II, p. 5.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

> Obfuscation is the rule, and while it may seem a little foolish at times, there is no doubt that it makes for a great deal of fun. It cultivates too a sharpness of ear, a feeling for half-tones and shades and subtleties, and a wary alertness that would be worth its weight in gold should one ever be lost in a jungle (Tracy 1953:20–21).

The quotation in some measure applies to interviewing in Inis Beag, where my wife and I took great pains to disentangle real from ideal culture by substantiating interview data with observation wherever possible.

The existence of the conditions depicted by Tracy, as well as the numerous cultural practices shrouded in secrecy, led us to return to the island several times after 1960 before I attempted this book, to emphasize various modes of participant observation, to devise *ad hoc* research methods of an unorthodox nature, to "hone" our orthodox tools and employ cross-checking techniques at every stage of our project, and to cultivate that "sharpness of ear . . . feeling for half-tones and shades and subtleties, and . . . wary alertness" which so distinguishes ethnographic endeavor as an art as well as a systematic epistemology. The use by many folk of "wings of fancy," "honeyed words," and "obfuscations"—popularly known as "blarney"—reflects a long tradition of verbal skill. It is a vital component of Irish and Inis Beag "charm," which often is the product of a delicately poised set of defense mechanisms; beneath it can lie feelings of inferiority and dislike, envy, and jealousy of others. Blarney can serve very effectively to shield genuine thoughts and feelings and thus defend the ego. Irish folklore and literature also reflect this tradition, and it is probably expressed most formidably in James Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake* (At least one Irish folklorist has collected "Joycean" utterances from peasants.).

Prestige Status

Inis Beag lacks a class system, and the status symbols which affect human relationships are few. That land and capital—known collectively as "money," "wealth," or "riches"—are the major symbols is revealed in the frequently heard phrase, "If you have money and your health, you're all right." (Health alone is mentioned by those of lesser means.). The men of highest prestige are the king and the 13 who own 24 or more acres of land. But they and their families do not interact more with one another than with others, for, as we have noted, the web of kinship rather than the possession of status attributes largely determines who will interact with whom and in what manner. Nor is their style of life different from that of other islanders, since material possessions and social etiquette are relatively unimportant in the status system. Although the king is a "man of few gardens," his capital, charismatic personality, and "connections" with priests, politicians, and civil servants earn him his high position in the status hierarchy. The prestige which comes with land ownership is based more on the fact of its possession than on the potential wealth that it represents. Men with large holdings can, of course, build more fields and on the increased acreage raise more cattle and sheep and grow more surplus crops for sale, but few take advantage of this oppor-